

SPARRMAN AS A CORRESPONDENT

With a portrait (Plate XVII.)

By MIA C. KARSTEN.

INTRODUCTION.

The Swede ANDERS SPARRMAN was one of the prominent eighteenth century botanists-travellers who took an active part in the botanical investigation of the Cape. He met his kinsman CARL PETER THUNBERG at the Cape, but unlike the Englishman FRANCIS MASSON, he did not accompany him on any journey into the interior of the Colony.

SPARRMAN was born the son of a vicar at Tensta in Uppland in 1748, and died in Stockholm in 1820. He studied medicine at the University of Upsala, where he befriended THUNBERG. But gradually he got greatly interested in natural history. It was his good fortune that brought him into contact with CARL GUSTAF EKEBERG (1716—1784), one of the most famous sea captains in the service of the Royal Swedish East-India Company. EKEBERG has made no less than ten successful voyages to the far East, six of which as the ship's master. He was also a very keen naturalist and is known to have brought home from China valuable plant collections and other "naturalia". He even managed to take the first living tea plants to Sweden, which were presented to LINNÆUS. The year 1761 saw his election as a member of the Swedish Academy of Science. As to his connections with SPARRMAN, he happened to have his property Altomta in the same parish in Uppland. Somehow he got interested in young SPARRMAN, which resulted in the latter's first long voyage. It was in 1765 that SPARRMAN, then a youth of 17 and a medical student, was taken by Captain EKEBERG on a voyage to Canton in China, in the capacity of the ship's surgeon (!), from which he returned in 1766. A few years later, in 1770, during a short visit to the Cape, EKEBERG made it his business to obtain permission to send thither a naturalist. Having noticed on the China journey the turn SPARRMAN had for natural history, EKEBERG would have liked him to go to the Cape as well. In 1771 he discussed the matter with the directors of the East-India Company. He emphasized that the voyage was likely to be of service to science. LINNÆUS who heard of this with "peculiar pleasure", as we read in the Preface of SPARRMAN'S *A Voyage to the Cape of Good Hope*, etc., drew up a petition for the voyage

to be made, in conformity with the statutes of the Company. The request was granted and it was ordered by the directors that SPARRMAN should be given free passage from Gothenburg to the Cape, together with every convenience, in one of the Company's vessels, the *Castle of Stockholm*. On January 10, 1772, the ship sailed for the Cape, and on April 12 she came to anchor in Table Bay. Next day SPARRMAN for the first time set foot upon African soil. The first thing he did was to wait upon the Governor, Baron JOACHIM VAN PLETENBERG, who kindly offered him the privilege of practising medicine. Later on he went to see the Resident at False Bay, referred to as "M. Kerste" in his *Voyage*. This must have been JOHANNES FREDERIK KIRSTEN* who was Resident at Simonstown (on False Bay) until 1774. As stated on one of the documents in the custody of the Cape Archives, KIRSTEN was often used by the Governor on various duties with foreigners, which leaves very little doubt as to the identity of the Resident at False Bay. But we fail to understand how SPARRMAN came to the statement (see *Voyage*, Vol. I, p. 13) that the Resident had been promoted Lieutenant-Governor, as the office of lieutenant-governor did not exist at the Cape in the time of the Dutch East-India Company.

The Resident who had been approached by Captain EKEBERG about sending a naturalist to the Cape, promised SPARRMAN that he would keep to what had been agreed with regard to scientific investigation. However, it was arranged, in order to avoid any risk of being considered as a spy on the country and its government, whilst travelling about the country looking for plants, insects, birds, etc., that he would instruct the children of the Resident in geography, French and mathematics. At the same time SPARRMAN was appointed interpreter between the Resident and the French who often came to Simonstown.

During the short time SPARRMAN had to stay in Cape Town, before taking his abode with the Resident, he enjoyed the company of his "old Upsal chum" THUNBERG who had arrived at the Cape on April 17, only a few days after him. They spent the time going about and botanizing together, but only too soon SPARRMAN had to leave for False Bay in order to begin his duties as a tutor. Very much to his regret, for he writes: "... by which means I lost the company of my countryman, who alone could make the Cape for me a little Sweden; and render our favourite study, which we both applied to in common, still more easy and delightful" (*Voyage*, Vol. I, p. 17). SPARRMAN stayed at False Bay for the winter months, during which period he explored the country near the Bay. Unlike THUNBERG, in whose *Travels in Europe, Africa and Asia* botany is in the forefront of his interests (his volumes yield a wealth of botanical

*His first name, JOHANNES, also appears as JOHAN or JAN in the Archives' records.

notes), SPARRMAN's enthusiasm for botany seems to have been overshadowed by a zeal for zoology, as is shown in his *Voyage* which abounds in descriptions of birds, fishes, mammals, etc., but does not give much about the plants he encountered on his journeys. Most of the botanical notes are to be found in Vol. I, in his description of his first stay at the Cape. May we quote here what SPARRMAN tells us about some of the wild flowers he saw on his excursions near False Bay in the winter and early spring of 1772.

Voyage, Vol. I, pp. 27—28: "The *antholyza maura** remarkable for its flowers, half white and half black, I found on one spot only of the mountain near one of the rivulets, that trickle down just before the slaughter-house. A very small *triandrous* plant (*staminibus monadelphis*) with comparatively large but beautiful yellow flowers, in the fine part of the day adorned a large plat of ground with its open blossoms, which however at other times were so entirely closed, as almost to disappear. The *calla aethiopica* delighted chiefly in moist places near the sea-shore, and was in flower the whole winter. *Proteas*, *ericas*, *cornuses*, *gnaphaliums*, *gnidias*, *echias*, *phyllicas*, *brunias*, and *periplocas*, two varieties of *myrica cerifera*, together with *cliffortias*, *thesias*, *polygalas*, *hermannias* and *asters*, were strewed promiscuously over the dry places on the declivity of the mountain. Quartered on the bare sand among these some *restios* were seen, together with divers *mesembryanthemums*. The *hyobanche sanguinea*, a *parasitic* plant, towards spring, began to throw out its blood-red tufts of flowers in the naked sand; an *osteospermum* or two, as well of the *arboreous* as *herbaceous* kind, we now and then likewise found in the bare sand. *Arctotides*, *calendulas*, and *othonnas*, throve chiefly in sandy places.

*In a footnote it is added that this plant composes a new genus, called by THUNBERG *Witsenia maura*. This remarkable and rather rare Iridaceous plant is still known under this name. As to the other plants mentioned by Sparrman, the reader may wonder what plants are meant by some of the names given. In most cases it was clear enough what plants these names applied to. For the convenience of our reader we may give the following explanatory list.

"cornuses" = ? *Curtisia faginea*, Ait., Assegaiwood (Cornaceae); "gnaphaliums" = *Helichrysums* (Comp.); "echias" or better "echiums" = *Lobostemon*s (Boraginaceae); "phyllicas", misspelled = *Phyllicas* (Rhamnaceae); "periplocas" = *Cynanchum africanum*, (L.) R. Br. (Asclepiad.); two varieties of the "Myrica cerifera" = most likely *Myrica cordifolia*, L., the Waxberry, and *M. aethiopica*, L. (Myricaceae); "thesias" = *Thesiums* (Santalaceae); "asters", undoubtedly including *Felicias* and other Cape Composites; "arctotides" = *Arctotis* spp. (Comp.); "calendulas" = *Dimorphothecas* (Comp.); stilbe = ? *Stilbe ericoides*, L. (Verbenaceae); "erinuses" = *Zaluzianskyas* and *Suteras* (Scroph.); "antirrhinums" = *Nemesias* (Scroph.).

There is little doubt about the identity of the small irises with a blue and white corolla, as this sounds very much like the description of a *Morea* sp. As to the very small plant, adorning a large patch of ground with its beautiful yellow flowers (characterized by 3 stamens united into one cluster) which only open "in the fine part of the day", we failed to identify this. The first plant mentioned in the above quotation, "*calla aethiopica*", our common Arum Lily, was later renamed *Zantedeschia aethiopica*, (L.) Spreng.

On the mountain besides *proteas*, *brunias*, *diosmas*, *ericas*, and the *stilbe*, we found *indigoferas*, *erinuses*, *selagos*, *manuleas*, *chironias* of different kinds, together with a great number of gynandrous plants. We likewise found greens and kitchen-garden plants in great plenty at this inauspicious time of the year. Towards spring, divers sorts of *ixias*, *gladioluses*, *moreas*, *oxalises*, *mesembryanthemums*, *antirrhinums*, and even various beautiful small *irises*, several inches high, with the corolla partly white and partly blue, began to push out of the ground."

From the description SPARRMAN gives of the Silver Tree, *Leucadendron argenteum*, R. Br. (introduced by him under the name "*protea argentea*"), we may quote here his concluding remarks (Vol. I, Sect. III (Residence at Alphen), p. 32): "This tree has at first a very uncommon, and indeed beautiful appearance. I am of opinion, however, that we should not chuse to change for it our delightful aspen-groves."

Switching over from plants to birds, just for one minute, our reader will certainly enjoy the more or less lyric description young SPARRMAN gives of one of our most picturesque birds, and which reads as follows: "On the plains before us we saw a large flock of *flamingoes* (*phoenicopt. ruber*), a species of bird of the crane kind (*grallae*) seeking their food in pools and puddles that were beginning to dry up. As they were larger than our cranes, and of a snow-white colour, with their wings of a flaming rosy hue, it is easy to imagine, what a delightful appearance they made in the green field, clad in so beautiful a livery." (Vol. I, p. 30.)

After the winter months had passed, the captains of the arriving ships preferred to anchor at Table Bay, which made the Resident's stay at False Bay no longer essential. So he moved to his homestead Alphen, about 3 miles from Constantia, and took SPARRMAN with him. By no means could SPARRMAN then have foreseen that in a very near future a chance meeting would make him leave the Cape for the most remote and barren parts of the world. From Alphen he made a trip to the Paarl, which would be his farthest afield during his stay at the Cape in 1772. Shortly before, about the beginning of September, he had taken leave from THUNBERG who was to set out on his first journey into the interior at the expense of the Dutch East-India Company.

Among the people whose acquaintance SPARRMAN had made at the Cape, was Baron VAN PREHM, a South African born, who was commander of the troops in the service of the Company. He appears to have been a man of some education. SPARRMAN tells us about him that he had visited Europe (which could not be said of most of his fellow-countrymen!) and was a lover of science. After SPARRMAN had returned from his journey to the Paarl, the ships *Resolution* and *Adventure*, destined to make a voyage to the Antarctic and round the world, were at anchor in Table Bay.

The former was under the command of the famous Captain JAMES COOK, the latter under that of Captain TOBIAS FURNEAUX (wrongly spelled Fournau by SPARRMAN as we shall see later). COOK had taken with him on the expedition two German naturalists, the professors J. R. and J. G. A. FORSTER, father and son, and it was Baron VAN PREHM who brought the FORSTERS to Alphen in order to be introduced to SPARRMAN, which resulted in the latter being invited to sail in the *Resolution* with Captain COOK as assistant to the FORSTERS.

They sailed from the Cape on November 22, 1772, and for the next 122 days they did not see land. It was on this long voyage that they penetrated for the first time beyond the Antarctic Circle. On March 26, 1773, they dropped anchor in Dusky Bay, near the southernmost promontory of New Zealand. Over three weeks later, after having sailed along the whole of the western coast of the island, they anchored in Queen Charlotte's Sound, whither they would return twice in the course of their voyage. From New Zealand they voyaged to Tahiti ("Otaheite"), an island "sacred to love", as SPARRMAN calls it, where the *Resolution* was nearly wrecked on the coral reefs, and some more islands in the Pacific. On a botanical excursion on one of these islands, called "Huaheine", SPARRMAN was attacked and plundered by the aborigines. They went back to New Zealand, on the coast of which they were separated from the other ship, the *Adventure*, in a storm; they were to sail separately for the rest of the journey. It was near Queen Charlotte's Sound that the entire boat's crew of the *Adventure* would come to a horrible end (see SPARRMAN's second letter to THUNBERG and footnote 13). On November 25, 1773, they sailed from New Zealand again, in order to explore, during another summer season, the cold southern latitudes once more. After having passed and repassed the Antarctic Circle for the second time, they travelled in a north-western direction, crossed the Tropic of Capricorn and penetrated far into Polynesia. On this extensive voyage they visited Easter Island and the Marquesas, and discovered New Caledonia, the largest island in the Pacific next to New Zealand. On October 18, 1774, they came to anchor for the third and last time in Queen Charlotte's Sound. They left New Zealand on November 10, and now sailed over the whole ocean between New Zealand and the southernmost part of America. They anchored to the South of Terra del Fuego, and passed Cape Horn at the end of December. Then they sailed to the south-east until the ship could not make any more headway on account of the ice pack. So they left the cold latitudes behind, and after seven weeks sailing the coast of the African continent loomed up. Finally, on March 22, 1775, after a voyage of 60,000 miles and an absence of two years and a quarter from the civilized world, they came to anchor again in Table Bay.

While the ship was in port, Captain COOK, the two FORSTERS and SPARRMAN took up their abode with Mr. CHRISTOPHER BRANDT, "a gentleman well known to the English by his obliging readiness to serve them" (COOK, *Voyage towards the South Pole*, etc., Vol. II, p. 265). Elsewhere we found a short note about BRANDT, informing us that he was an officer of the Dutch East-India Company in charge of False Bay (*Voyage round the World with Captain James Cook, by Sparrman*, (p. 205), publ. by Golden Cockerel Press).

During the greater part of the winter SPARRMAN stayed in town, practising physic and surgery, and preparing for his contemplated long journey into the interior. He could finance the expedition with the money he earned as a physician and by selling for 60 ducats (£27) his translation of a Swedish treatise on the Diseases of Children (see SPARRMAN'S second letter to THUNBERG and footnote 23). Besides, his means had been "farther fortified by a lucky speculation in commerce" (*Voyage*, Vol. I, p. 114). Among the things SPARRMAN had to purchase for the journey were a "baggage-waggon" with a team of ten oxen, and a riding-horse for his personal use.

SPARRMAN had made friends at the Cape with a young man named DANIEL FERDINAND IMMELMAN, whom he would have liked to go with him on his expedition. He approached his parents (and lovely sister!) on the matter, and apparently it took some persuasion to get their consent. Young IMMELMAN happened to have very weak lungs, so after all it was agreed that "the best remedy for him would be to take a long journey on horseback, especially as he had the advantage of being accompanied by a physician" (*Voyage*, Vol. I, p. 116). We have no doubt about it that IMMELMAN whose father, an experienced soldier, then served as a lieutenant in the garrison at the Cape, was the very same youth who accompanied THUNBERG on his first journey into Caffraria (September, 1772—January, 1773). It is rather amusing what SPARRMAN tells us about him in Vol. II, p. 137, of his *Voyage*. After having described his handsome and bearded appearance, he informs us that IMMELMAN "figured on horseback in a long night-gown, with a white night-cap."

On July 25, 1775, they rode from the Cape.* They reached Warm Bath (Caledon) within a couple of days, and after a month's stay at the baths, they moved on to Swellendam, where they arrived on September 2, and only stayed the night. Continuing their journey, they crossed the Great Brak River beyond Mossel Bay. Retracing their steps a short

*The following brief explanatory survey of SPARRMAN'S journey we have taken from Mr. FORBES'S paper on SPARRMAN'S travels, published in the S.A. Geographical Journal. The author by explaining the position of the localities mentioned by SPARRMAN (sometimes under a name which is now obsolete) gives a clearer picture of the route followed by this Swedish naturalist-traveller.

distance, they went through the Attaquas Kloof and made their way eastwards beneath the northern slopes of the Outeniqua Mountains, and down the Lange Kloof to Leeuwenbosch (near Humansdorp). When they reached this point they had been on the way for about four months. From Leeuwenbosch they passed by the Zwartkops saltpan, the Sundays and New Years rivers to the outpost district of Agter Brintjes Hoogte (Somerset East) on the Little Fish River. They stayed in this region for three weeks, and on January 21, 1776, they departed for the Great Fish River in the vicinity of Cookhouse, which would be their farthest point. On February 6 they set out on their return journey. They travelled by much the same route and on April 15 they arrived again at the Cape. Shortly after SPARRMAN sailed for his home country Sweden.

In his description of the journey into the interior SPARRMAN mentions the "Essen-bosch" in the region near Lange Kloof which he visited at the beginning of November, 1775. The Cape ash (Dutch "es") has nothing in common with the European ash-trees, but represents an altogether different genus, belonging to the Meliaceae. It is a monotypic genus, first described by SPARRMAN in the Kongl. Vetenskaps Academiens Handlingar, Stockholm (Transact. of the Royal Academy of Science) and named *Ekebergia* (with sole species *E. capensis*, Sparrm.) "in compliment to the Chevalier CHARLES GUSTAVUS EKEBERG, Member of the Royal Academy of Sciences, and Knight of the Order of Vasa, who was the occasion of my making this voyage; and who, by his zeal for natural history, and the great pains he has been at in promoting it, is highly deserving of this distinction." (*Voyage*, Vol. I, p. 311).

SPARRMAN'S merits as a botanist were recognized by the younger LINNAEUS who named after him the South African genus *Sparrmania* (Tiliaceae), of which *S. africana*, L. f. is best known, and also a Cape *Erica*, viz. *E. sparrmani*, L. f. Note the correct spelling of both names.

The younger FORSTER has dedicated to SPARRMAN his work on the scientific results of the voyage round the world, etc., *Florula Insularum Australium Prodrromus* (Göttingen, 1784).

On December 14, 1775, the University of Upsala bestowed on him *in absentia* the degree of Doctor of Physic (=Medicine). At that time SPARRMAN had reached the Assegai Bosch at the foot of the Tzitzikama Mountains (Eastern Cape). On his return home he was made a member of the Royal Academy of Science at Stockholm. After the death of the Swedish entomologist Baron DE GEER, who had bequeathed his extensive collection of "natural curiosities" to the Academy, SPARRMAN was appointed "inspector" of it, or "conservator" as we would call it now. About the same time the King invested him with an honorary professorship. In 1781 he was appointed professor of natural history at Upsala University.

Whilst collecting biographical records of the trio THUNBERG-SPARRMAN-MASSON, a Swedish correspondent, Dr. HJ. ARVID UGGLA of Upsala, well-known for his publications on the life and work of the great LINNAEUS, drew our attention to two sets of SPARRMAN letters he had come across. The one set, in the custody of the Upsala University Library, under No. G 300 ä, comprises four letters SPARRMAN wrote to THUNBERG. The other set, in the possession of the Linnean Society in London, numbers eight letters to LINNAEUS, one short note to the Secretary of the Swedish Academy of Science, WARGENTIN, and a fragment by the younger LINNAEUS, viz. an introduction to a paper published in the Academy's Transactions about *Erica sparrmani*. Dr. UGGLA most kindly undertook to translate this correspondence from the original Swedish into English on our behalf, and this must have been a rather tricky job. As Dr. UGGLA points out, SPARRMAN's Swedish was not easy to translate; it is rather irregular and written in a whimsical way. Of the four letters written to THUNBERG he gave a practically unabridged translation. In one or two places only some further remarks (obviously of minor interest or maybe not quite suitable to be printed . . .) have been left out. As to the other set, the letters to LINNAEUS, Dr. UGGLA has mostly reproduced them in the third person, but without much curtailing. In these letters SPARRMAN also deals with various zoological specimens, collected at the Cape and elsewhere.

This correspondence needed a good deal of editing and annotating. I have been able to trace all people but four mentioned by SPARRMAN. Short biographical notes about the persons in question have been added. I went through Dr. UGGLA's translation at his request, and in various places I have had to deviate from the literal translation for the sake of clearness. All that has been inserted by the translator and myself in the verbally reproduced letters (viz. in the first person) and in the various quotations has been put between square brackets.

These letters which have not been published before, give a remarkable portrait of the man SPARRMAN, who, apart from natural history, showed a keen interest in the fair sex (not very particular about "colour"!) and also in money, of which he wanted to gather a good deal. But it may serve as an excuse that he was a high-spirited young fellow of 24 when he first arrived at the Cape and later set out on his voyage to the Antarctic and round the world. The way he addresses THUNBERG in his letters sometimes sounds a little sarcastic or even mocking. SPARRMAN might well have been envious of his "Upsal chum" THUNBERG, the "father of Cape Botany", who definitely was a far better botanist and also a more educated man. When he suggests that THUNBERG should let him have his observations at the Cape to be included in a publication of his own (see his letter

of March 27, 1775), he obviously puts himself on one level with THUNBERG. For the rest SPARRMAN seems to have been an amenable young man, well liked by his friends and fellow-travellers. The relations between him and the FORSTERS were quite amicable. When the *Resolution* sailed for England from the Cape in April, 1775 (three months before SPARRMAN left on his journey into the interior), GEORGE FORSTER (the son) wrote among other things: "... after taking leave of all our friends, and particularly of Dr. Sparman, who had shared the perils and distresses of our voyage, and whose heart had endeared him to all who knew him, we came on board on the 27th in the morning". (Quoted from OWEN RUTTER's Introduction to *A Voyage round the World with Captain James Cook . . . by Anders Sparman*).

I want to express my grateful thanks to Dr. UGGLA for presenting me with these two sets of letters, and the trouble taken in translating them from the Swedish. A portrait of SPARRMAN reproduced herewith I also owe to his kindness. Further I am indebted to Prof. ROB. E. FRIES of Stockholm, and the Chief Librarian of the Cape Archives at Cape Town for some biographical records, and Dr. JOHN HEWITT, Director of the Albany Museum at Grahamstown, for some zoological information.

LITERATURE.

The following works have been made use of for the introduction and the Sparman correspondence.

- C. A. BACKER, *Verklarend Woordenboek der Wetenschappelijke Plantennamen*. Groningen (Holland). 1936. (Explanatory dictionary of scientific plantnames).
- JAMES COOK, *A Voyage towards the South Pole and Round the World*. Performed in His Majesty's Ships the *Resolution* and *Adventure*. Vol. II, 3rd edition. London. 1779.
- Encyclopaedia Britannica*.
- V. S. FORBES, *Sparman's Travels*, in *South African Geographical Journal*, Vol. XXVII, April, 1945.
- ROB. E. FRIES, *De Linnéanska "Apostlarnas" Resor*. Kommentarer till en karta. Svenska Linné-Sällskapets Årsskrift, Årg. XXXIII—XXXIV. 1950—1951. (The journeys of Linnaeus's "apostles", publ. in the Yearbook of the Swedish Linnean Society). A commentary on a map on which the journeys of THUNBERG, SPARRMAN, SOLANDER, and other Swedish botanists-travellers are clearly shown.
- H. O. JUEL, *Plantae Thunbergianae*. Herausgegeben mit Unterstützung des Vilh. Ekman'schen Universitätsfonds. Uppsala. 1918. (Published with a grant of the . . . University Fund).
- MIA C. KARSTEN, *Carl Peter Thunberg. An early Investigator of Cape Botany*, I—III, *Journal of South African Botany*, Vol. V, Jan., July and Oct., 1939.
- *The Old Company's Garden at the Cape and its Superintendents*. Cape Town, 1951.

- ANDREW SPARRMAN, *A Voyage to the Cape of Good Hope, towards the antarctic Polar circle, and round the World; but chiefly into the Country of the Hottentots and Caffres, from the year 1772, to 1776.* Transl. from the Swedish original. In two vols. 2nd Edition, corrected. London. 1786.
- *A Voyage round the World with Captain James Cook in H.M.S. Resolution.* Introduction and Notes by OWEN RUTTER. Golden Cockerel Press, London. 1944.
- NILS SVEDELIUS, *Carl Peter Thunberg 1743—1828.* Linné-Sällskapets Årsskrift, Arg. XXVII, 1944.—Sparrman: p. 31.
- *Ett porträtt av Kinafararen Kapten C. G. Ekeberg, i K. Vetenskaps-societetens Samlingar.* Kungl. Vetenskaps-societetens Årsbok 1945. (A portrait of the China traveller Capt. C. G. Ekeberg, in the collections of the Royal Society of Science, published in the Society's Yearbook). Some notes about the portrait referred to and a biographical account). Upsala 1945.
- CARL PETER THUNBERG, *Travels in Europe, Africa, and Asia, made between the years 1770 and 1779.* Vol. I of 3rd edition, London. 1795.

I. ANDERS SPARRMAN TO CARL PETER THUNBERG.

FIRST LETTER.

(Upsala University Library, G 300 ä.)

Caput B: spei: d.—Novembris 1772.¹

Please accept my cordial and thousandfold thanks for all proofs of friendship you have given me both on Swedish and African soil. I am particularly sensible to all your friendliness here because of my plans which will have been carried out already by the time you get this letter. It is an enterprise in which I should well have needed such a candid friend's advice like yours, dear Sir. But I guess you have already been told that I would go with the English to the South Pole and further round the Earth. What do you think of this? This I will know only two years from now . . . if my grave will not be at the South Pole! But I much regret that then [after the voyage round the world] I shall not meet you here [at the Cape]. Well then, let me have a reliable address and I will come to Japan after you. However, time is short now, therefore I will only let you know in a few words the reasons of my decision which are the following:

1) botanizing here *en maître d'école*² is about the same as going to a feast and gnawing the flesh from a bone. The school dust gets on your chest, and flogging vocables and triangles into children is an irksome job;

2) Curiosa Capensia will certainly be well-known without my help, as there are now so many "commissioners" here, thanks to this clever Dr. Thunberg who has penetrated into the heart of Africa, with attentive

¹ No date given.² As a school master.

eyes and more talent than any that may ever be coming. This, as also Oldb.³ has seen, I have written to the Archiater⁴;

3) If I succeed, I shall be trained by daily work in N: H: [Natural History] alone, by intercourse with the solid Forsters and by means of a costly library. Besides, I can learn to draw and make myself familiar with the English language, etc. Certainly there will be some place in India, later on, where a botanist is needed, Ceylon e.g. [sic!], and then I would go thither. At that place I should not be ashamed for what I did [??]. I am 24 now, there is still time for me to spend in India, God willing. And if I would return to England, surely some expedient will turn up. Both the Forsters I am going with are German-born and very honest people. They try to render my voyage as comfortable and pleasant as their own, and they give me 100 Ducats as a yearly salary for such little help as I can give them, but this only between you and me. I do not want anybody to know about it. There is nobody else who knows about it more than you [? this is not quite clear]. This [salary] is not much, but during the voyage not a farthing will be spent. I have not got a separate cabin, but must live in the cabin where the library is and where meals are served. But I use the Captain's or the botanists' cabin if I want to write. We shall never have more than a two months' voyage before we get to land and find plants such as I could never get otherwise. But I hope to be allowed to exchange with Dr. Thunberg for [specimens of] the Cape flora. The English way of living is much more reasonable than the Dutch, and even better in some respects than it is on the Swedish ships. The Captain seems to be a very honest fellow and is the same as the one Solander went with. My dear friend, do write a lengthy letter about your doings and leave it here until I return. If I die, let some tears fall on my memory in your Hist. C. B. Sp. [History of the Cape of Good Hope], and do not forget that I am your very sincere friend. Think of me in Japan as I will do of you at the South Pole.

³ This is FRANZ PEHR OLDENBURG, a fellow-countryman of SPARRMAN and THUNBERG. We cannot find any records as to the year of his arrival at the Cape, but we know that in 1772 he was THUNBERG's indefatigable companion on the Cape Peninsula. Towards the end of that year he set out with FRANCIS MASSON on the latter's first journey into the interior (December 10, 1772—January 18, 1773), on which he collected a great number of plants. In 1774 he went to Madagascar, on recommendation of THUNBERG, where he made several collections of plants. But he was never to return from that island, as he was stricken by a malignant fever from which he died. OLDENBURG was a soldier by profession, but when he embarked on his Madagascar journey, he had been practising botany for the space of two years. In 1772 he collected about 1,000 specimens of Cape plants which were obtained by BANKS and are now kept in the Herbarium of the British Museum (South Kensington).

His merits as an investigator of the Cape flora were acknowledged by LESSING who named after him the handsome South African genus *Oldenburgia* (Compositae). In the vicinity of Grahamstown the interesting *O. arbuscula*, DC. is a rather common feature on outcrops of rock. It is a low shrub with dark green leathery leaves which are very hairy underneath, like soft white felt.

Abt. OLDENBURG, see also this Journal, Vol. V, October, 1939, p. 136 (footnote).

⁴ CAROLUS LINNAEUS or CARL VON LINNÉ.

I now send my duplicates to the Archiater Linné; there will certainly be no new ones among them, for Oldenb: says that he has sent to Bergius⁵ all such as you have told him to be new. A Triandrism with yellow flower and hexagynae,⁶ which I have drawn and described, has been sent to the English Acad. of Science under the name of *Forstera*⁷. Only recently I found a new genus at the Cape. 5dria...⁸ like your *Oxalis simplex*. N.B. Pistilli basi sunt coherentes⁹ etc. and bigger. It can never be *Moraea* as it seems to me?—The Forsters have described and drawn a multitude of new animals in the Garden, they have bought birds more than I have seen here.—If anything is seen on the Sea, a barge is sent out to find it, such is amusing... They are not jealous, but communicate their observations and descriptions to v. Linné. They have excellent knowledge about animals as well as insects, and where plants are concerned they are not much lacking [in knowledge].

But farewell then, dear Friend, God bless us both and let us once again botanize together, if not before, then on the Elysian Fields.¹⁰ May Heaven favour your enterprises to your delight and advantage! This is the wish of your sincere friend And. Sparrman.

P.S. Please remind my gardener of sending plants to Captain Ekeberg. If some drugs are sent to me, please render your help in having them sold. If iron spades arrive, have them stored until my return, D.V. [Deo volente, God willing]—the drugs may be stored as well.

This letter was addressed to:

Monsieur

Monsieur Pierre Thunberg

Docteur en médecine

t'huys Bey Myn Heer Fhcesse¹¹

⁵ PETER JONAS BERGIUS (1730-1790), a compatriot of SPARRMAN, was a medical doctor and an outstanding figure in the botanical world. When at college at Upsala he was so captivated by the lectures of LINNAEUS, that he decided to devote himself especially to botany. Having finished his medical studies in 1753, he set up at Stockholm where he got a large practice and kept working until his death.

The year 1761 saw his appointment as a professor of natural history.

BERGIUS who may be ranked as one of THUNBERG's best friends and helpers at home, is the author of *Descriptiones Plantarum ex Capite Bonae Spei* (1767), our first Cape flora. See also this Journal. Vol. V, July, 1939, pp. 92—93.

⁶ A yellow flower, triandrous (3-stamened) and hexagynous (with 6 pistils).

⁷ The genus *Forstera*, L.f. (Candolleaceae, for the greater part Australian plants) belongs to the flora of Tasmania and New Zealand.

⁸ 5dria = pentandrous (5-stamened).

⁹ Pistils united at the base.

¹⁰ Pre-hellenic paradise.

¹¹ This is Mynheer HENDRIK FEHRSEN, at whose home THUNBERG took a lodging when he arrived at the Cape in April, 1772.

SECOND LETTER.

Cape Town, March 27, 1775.

My dearest friend and patron,

Oh, may this letter reach you safe and sound before your departure for far-away Japan, this in order to let you know that *he* is still living, who wishes his friend Thunberg all kinds of happiness. On the 21st of March, 1775, according to the calendar, but the 22nd by our reckoning (for one day is gained if one goes round the world against the sun), we arrived at the Cape with the loss of three, two of them having died through an accident, the third of a phthisis [lung t.b.] of long duration. There was hardly a soul [lit. nearly nobody] who was more ill than that he could not have danced at the arrival, and the state of health [on the ship] was about as good all the time. I know that you, Sir, have predicted *multum sinistri*¹² on this point, therefore I am first of all anxious to prevent such ideas.—But then let me tell you how much I was grieved to find that you had left the town before I could have had the opportunity of speaking to you, especially before you would go on another long and tiring voyage. What a satisfaction would it not have been to get a little longer letter. However, many 1000 thanks for those I received in your envelope, viz. from you and from other friends. Thank God they did not contain any bad news. But let me return to our journey. We separated from Captain Fourneau and had some recreation at New Zealand till the end of November [1773]. Then we went to 71° [of South latitude], found no land but a great deal of ice, and on the 11th of March [1774] we arrived at a not quite unknown island in the tropics, viz. Easter Island, from there we visited islands both known and unknown, and in November [of that year] we arrived at New Zealand [again], at the same spot where Capt. Fourneau's men had been eaten, without our knowing about it.¹³ From there we reached Cape Horn in Jan. 1755 [a mere slip of the pen, should be 1775 of course], and discovered some islands nearly covered with snow and ice. There were two European plants only, *Sanguisorba* and

¹² Much evil.

¹³ COOK'S *A Voyage towards the South Pole and round the World* (1779) contains Capt. FURNEAUX's narrative of his proceedings in the *Adventure*, from the time he was separated from the *Resolution*, to his arrival in England; including Lieutenant BURNEY's report concerning the boat's crew who were murdered and eaten by the inhabitants of Queen Charlotte's Sound. On the 17th of December, 1773, having refitted the ship, they sent out their large cutter, with Mr. ROWE, a midshipman, and the boat's crew, to gather wild greens for the ship's company, with orders to return that evening, but when they did not come back that evening, nor the next morning, the launch, manned with Lieutenant BURNEY, the boat's crew and ten marines, was lowered and sent in search of the cutter. They found no boat, but instead, the heads, hearts and lungs of the unfortunate men scattered all over the beach.

Dactylis,¹⁴ which constituted the entire flora. We caught and ate penguins and sea-lions. We have got some hundred new plants only, because we went so far south. All [notes and drawings are] ready to be printed and engraved. Had it not been for the cold during the summer months in the South, the voyage would have been quite pleasant, notwithstanding an occasional dissension, for the prevention of which I found an effective method in good time. I now intend to remain here [at the Cape] on my own account for one year at most in order to cure by bathing a *herpes*¹⁵ that appears on my hands during the winter and in cold weather. I intend to study as much as possible during this time, but how useful would it not have been to have got your instructions as to what to observe, where to go and particularly what to describe! For it would be *opus operatum*¹⁶ to describe what you have treated in such a masterly way. Anyhow I will get to know something from Mr. Masson who is now going home to England.—Mr. Kepler¹⁷ sends his kind regards. He will not be able to send your collections this year, because the Swedish ships went to St. Helena without calling at the Cape. He will let you know as soon as he can send them off. Mr. Masson too sends his greetings.—But why did you want to go to Japan after having already won as much honour as could ever be wished? This means to sacrifice oneself altogether—but may Heaven support you in your zealous enterprise and help you [to get] home before long. By all means don't stay more than one year in Japan, but return home as soon as possible in order to arrange your collections from the Cape. My own collection and assistance may be of some use. Do keep away from Batavia as far as possible. Buy some corn, make it into malt, take it with you to Japan, make a decoction or—which is the same—wort, and drink half a quarter of a gallon twice a day. This keeps the stomach in order, makes a healthy, robust and fat constitution, cures the Scorbut even to a high degree. This we have experienced, as to wort, during our voyage. Take at Batavia a daily dose of Peruvian bark.¹⁸ Have a bowl with acid standing at the side of your bed etc., this according to Dr. Lind, in order to preserve [good] health in hot climates . . . [more about this subject, how to prevent meat from rotting,

¹⁴ *Sanguisorba*: burnet (Rosaceae). Dactylis: tussockgrass, originally described under the name *Dactylis caespitosa*, but later renamed *Poa flabellata*, Hook. It grows in the Falkland Islands, 'wherever the waves beat with the greatest vehemence and the saline spray is carried farthest. . . ' It is 'the gold and the glory of its island home, where it provides food for cattle and man.' (W. J. HOOKER in HOOKER'S London Journal of Botany, Vol. II, 1843).

¹⁵ Eruption of the skin.

¹⁶ Latin, the translation of which reads: working at a job already performed.

¹⁷ We have not succeeded in establishing the identity of SPARRMAN and THUNBERG's mutual friend KEPLER. All we know is that SPARRMAN took a lodging in his home in 1775 (see his letter of April 29, 1775).

¹⁸ *Cinchona*.

etc.—transl.] Excuse me writing such things to a M.D., but, on my honour, I'd rather risk your displeasure than that you should be unacquainted with these new experiences of the English, lest you have not had the opportunity to read their papers at the Cape (which is a desert as regards the learned world). May not Science incur a loss by the decease of Dr. Thunberg just as by that of Falk and Gmelin! The former shot himself from spleen, the latter died in jail among Kalmucks or Tartars.¹⁹ Mr. F[orster] will first publish *Genera plantarum novarum* with engravings like Tournefort's²⁰ with the flower opened, in different positions and magnified, even the capsule. This is rather useful. Allow me to recommend you to do the same. You will have no other pleasure than drawing, if you will be shut up in the factory²¹ in Japan. Take care of the spleen and Falk's evil fate. Try and put peculiar flowers in weak spirit, if you have not time enough to draw them. I am going to try this. Please do write me from Batavia at Mr. Kepler's address, about your condition and how many plants have been sent to Burmannus²² and to Sweden, how they will be preserved there, etc. I wish you everything that may be to your honour, and I should be glad to get your advice about this [the foregoing] before I return to Sweden and undertake anything concerning Cape plants.

¹⁹ JOHAN PETER FALCK was a Swede born in 1733. In 1751 he came to Upsala where he became a disciple of LINNAEUS. For some time he acted as "informator" (private tutor) of LINNAEUS'S son. In 1763 he went to St. Petersburg (the later Leningrad), and two years later he was there nominated medicinae and botanices professor and director of the Botanical Garden. In 1768 the Empress Catharina II sent him on a scientific expedition to the inner parts of Russia, where he died on March 21, 1774. Prof. FRIES of Stockholm to whom we owe these biographical records, did not mention the cause of his death.

LINNAEUS named after him the South African genus *Falckia* (Convolvulaceae). The only species, *F. repens*, Thunb., common throughout the Cape, was described by THUNBERG in 1776.

SAMUEL GOTTLIEB GMELIN (1743—1774), son of an apothecary and surgeon in Tübingen, Germany, was appointed professor of natural history in St. Petersburg in 1766, and in the following year started on a journey through south Russia and the regions round the Caspian Sea. On his way back he was captured by USMEH KHAN, of the Kaitak tribe, and died from ill-treatment he suffered, on July 27, 1774.

²⁰ J. PITTON DE TOURNEFORT (1656—1708) was a French botanist who travelled extensively over Europe and Asia Minor. From his journeys he brought home a great many specimens of plants. He set up an artificial plant system based on the shape of the corolla, and provided good descriptions of genera. He became a professor of botany in Paris at the early age of 21. The genus *Tournefortia*, L. (Boraginaceae) was named after him.

²¹ This sounds like a misinterpretation of the word "factory" which in this case means a trading-post, viz. the "Factorij" of the Dutch East-India Company on the island of Decima in the bay of Nagasaki.

²² NICOLAAS LAURENS BURMAN or BURMANNUS (1733—1793), a physician by profession, succeeded his father JAN BURMAN, author of *Decades Rariorum Africanarum Plantarum* (1738—39), as a professor of botany at the Athenaeum Illustre (later to become the university) at Amsterdam. He was keenly interested in the Cape flora. THUNBERG who knew both the BURMANS, was very good friends with the younger BURMAN and his wife who extended to him the greatest hospitality during his stay at Amsterdam in the autumn of 1770 and in 1778 on his home journey to Sweden.

See also this Journal, Vol. V, January, 1939, pp. 4—18 (with portrait).

I should like to publish *Hist. Cap. B. Sp.* [History of the Cape of Good Hope] in the meantime, if I had the opportunity to enrich it with your observations. Have you got a MS of them and would you entrust them to me, with your permission to make use of them? Then your honour would grow still more [in my esteem]. Mr. Forster does not at all care about Cape plants, but animals and fishes are drawn and painted as many as possible. —Amuse yourself by learning a little of the Japanese language, and also by finding out the state of affairs among the Japanese [literally: them]. I can assure you that such will be good for the purse when you come home. During my journey I translated Rosén's²³ book on children's diseases into English. I hope this will provide my poor relations with some 40 or 60 ducats. This is one of the greatest satisfactions I have got from my voyage. My goodness, if you and I could have worked together, what pleasure and satisfaction [this would have been]! However, as Fate has otherwise disposed, may each of us succeed and work with as much pleasure as possible till we meet again on Swedish soil.

This wishes with burning desire
the most learned Mr. Doctor's
most sincere friend
And. Sparrman

P.S. I shall put away for you a collection, as complete as possible, of South Sea plants, in case you would think it worth possessing them, As for me I would like to have Japan plants and such from the Cape I have not been able to find myself.—P.S. I have also a collection of birds stuffed or in spirits, which I intend to make known.

Addressed to:

Myn Heer
d'heer Petrus Thunberg
Doctor Botanicus
tot
Batavia
Gelieve na gemelde te informeeren
in d'appoteeck of Hotel
tot Batavia²⁴

²³ A Swedish physician, called VAN ROSENSTEIN in SPARRMAN'S *Voyage to the Cape of Good Hope*, Vol. 1 (1786), p. 114.

²⁴ Not entirely faultless Dutch in the spelling of those days which reads in English translation: Please inquire for mentioned person at the dispensary or Hotel [? this is not quite clear; see beginning of next letter] at Batavia.

THIRD LETTER.

Cape Town, April 29, 1775.

I hope my former [letter] has reached you. It was addressed to the Apothecary at the city gate at Batavia. Therefore I will only repeat that I am back with a whole skin, with exception of the ordinary nine holes [sic!] from the Antarctic, the southern Thule,²⁵ and other *terris australibus* where the entire flora consists of a poor, familiar Sanguisorba and a Dactylis. All the new [plants] from the tropical islands and New Zealand numbered some two hundred and fifty, and from between the tropics there are many already known [literally: much of old—transl.] East Indian [plants].—But let us now talk first about news brought here with the East-Indiaman from Sweden. I don't know anything of more interest than that the Academy of Science has sent 100 Riksdaler²⁶ to a gentleman called Thunberg who is staying at the Cape—that is how the order runs to the Supercargo Fors who had this in commission. At the recommendation of Kepler I talked to the man and asked him to let the money be paid to your order through a letter from Batavia. But Mr. Fors, as a good soldier, keeps himself *verbatim*²⁷ to his orders and does not go a step on his risk. All I could obtain was that he gave order to the Swedish extortioner [sic!], no, Consul I ought to say, that he should pay 100 Riksdaler to Dr. Thunberg (or Pesos, I don't know exactly), but N.B. at his return only, and, according to the order of the Company, to its "Opperscribbler" or Supercargo, when he comes and stays at the Cape. Qui bene distinguit, bene docet²⁸, as the metaphysica says [?]. The Royal Academy [of Sweden] is clever about books, but not cunning enough, I am afraid, to send money in such a way that lawyers and porcelain-clerks [??] may not find out some subterfuge. It was evident of course that the Academy had intended the money to be a help in your needs, but how will their intention now be fulfilled? Mr. Fors could not deny this [viz. the Academy's intention], but he excused himself on the ground of his formal orders. He is otherwise amenable and well liked. He might come back here next year. Now let me advise you to send your order to the Cape for the

²⁵ Thule: Greek and Roman name for the most northerly land in the world.

²⁶ In a letter to THUNBERG, addressed to the Cape, dated November 6, 1774, BERGIUS writes about the 100 Riksdaler in cash, which THUNBERG would obtain as a present from the R. Academy of Science. As a matter of fact Capt. EKEBERG had written to BERGIUS that THUNBERG was not paid in the Dutch service as he ought to be. Over a year later, December 25, 1775, BERGIUS sent another letter to THUNBERG, in which he inquired about the 100 Riksdalers sent to the Cape by means of the East-India Company (see this Journal, Vol. V, July, 1939, pp. 96—97). The Swedish Riksdaler (Rixdollar) is obviously meant here. It was a silver coin, now obsolete.

²⁷ SPARRMAN erroneously writes "verbotim"

²⁸ He who distinguishes well, teaches well.

money set apart for you (N.B. *if* you need it). If Le Fevre²⁹ refuses, I am sure there are others who are willing to pay on a cheque drawn on the Academy who will certainly honour it. But you have to send the letter in threefold.

Now the English have gone away whom I accompanied these 28 days [?]; I also kept them company during the 5 weeks they stayed here, that is to say in drinking and eating only³⁰. Now I have moved to our common friend Mynheer Kepler in whose ark I am going to conceal myself, as long as the windows of the sky are open during the quay masong³¹. Later on, during next summer, I shall fly off like Noah's dove (N.B. on oxenwings! and "ossenwaggen") in order to bring home green leaves. Certainly I shall have the opportunity before that to reflect on the foolishness of grass-collectors who fly round the world as "dry skins" for nimmendal³² only, while an unlearned devil of a rustic may be staying at home with his wife, ploughing and sowing. But beware of Hypochondria and Falk's fate. In order to prevent this I shall never use a pistol or a rope in the house. But—I repeat my kind advice—don't tarry more than one year in Japan. Could you with a good conscience [abandon] Sweden for another year? Remember that you are Dutch in religion only. Were it not for the painful circumcision, it would be worth while to become a Japanese for some years with the privilege to move freely [literally: to go about everywhere—transl.]. But the worst would be if one could not get away any more. However, it seems to me that it must be very bad to be shut up in a factory or on a kind of "Robbins Island". Damn their rascally blood for so doing [This was written in English—transl.] *Maar aber aber dass*³³ I doubt that this will reach you at Batavia, but if it does, let me know *cujus generis*³⁴ the girls are over there. Couldn't you find one who has some hundred thousands and the heart in the right place? It is of no account if she is brown as calf's skin or yellow as an omelette. It

²⁹ At the Government Archives at Cape Town nothing is known of a man called LE FEVRE (or LE FEBRE) acting as consul for Sweden during the time in question. The only person of that name, who occupied a more or less official position at the Cape during that time, was, as far as could be established, the "burgervaandrig" JACOBUS ALEXANDER LA FEBRE, who was born at the Cape. But he is not known to have had any dealings with SPARRMAN.

³⁰ SPARRMAN's English companions were the men of the *Resolution*. In his *Voyage* it is stated that they stayed at the Cape for about five weeks after their ship had arrived in Table Bay. We don't understand the four weeks' companionship.

³¹ "Quaade mousson" in the Dutch of those days (now spelt "kwade moesson"), badly misspelt by SPARRMAN. It means the bad season, viz. the rainy winter season at the Cape, reckoned from May 14th till August 14th.

³² This is Dutch and means "nothing at all". But SPARRMAN's spelling is incorrect, it should be "niemendal". We can but guess the meaning of "dry skins for nothing at all": good-for-nothings perhaps?

³³ A combination of Dutch ("maar"=but) and German ("aber dass"=but that . . .), which can be best translated in this context by: But . . ., but . . .

³⁴ Latin, which means of what genus. Here: what kind of . . .

seems to me that the Swedish winters and cold ought to dispose you to such a thing [?]. Would it not be better to take home to the fatherland such a precious thing than a haycart with parsley, chervil, etc. from Japan? . . . Oh, vanitas—omnia sunt vanitates!³⁵—Yesterday I was looking at how justice was exercised at the Gallows, to-day my benevolent host is going to introduce me to a wedding.—If things turn out successfully, I shall get the company of young Himmelmann³⁶ on my journey into the interior, quod Deus bene vertat!³⁷ I shall try to make small drawings of *characteres generum* methodo Plumieriana et Tournefortiana³⁸. I wished I could confer with your descriptions and names beforehand. If I could find some two hundred new [plants] which Mynheer had not seen and got, I would reckon it *bonum*³⁹. I wished I could anatomize and draw the Hippopothamus⁴⁰; I can get the necessary scalpel. Also the anatomy of the Penguin, etc. [I would like to perform]. Everything you want is damned expensive here, let alone that much your body wants cannot be had here. I prefer the South Sea and some islands there, where every shrub formed a house, and a nail was the price of love-making. But, but—the bearer tells me to hurry and does not let me tell you [any] more stories, but he must give me the time to assure you . . .⁴¹

P.S. It is possible that the Swedish ship puts in here on her way home, and that I go with her. Then your things could also be sent. That chaplain whom Kepler recommended so warmly, is called Barkenbom, from Gothenburg. The captain's name is Schröder, the assistants were Almroth and Conradi.

P.S. It was a good thing and a great satisfaction to learn from

³⁵ Apparently SPARRMAN's Latin version of a well-known Bible text, viz. Vanity of vanities, all is vanity (Eccles. I).

³⁶ DANIEL FERDINAND IMMELMAN!

³⁷ . . . , which God may bring to a good end!

³⁸ Characters of genera according to the method of PLUMIER and TOURNEFORT.

CHARLES PLUMIER (1646—1704) was a French-born Franciscan friar. He was a good botanist and an excellent draughtsman. Together with his fellow-countryman J. D. SURIAN (a physician-apothecary by profession) he visited Martinique, the Western half of Haiti and some smaller islands from 1689—90, on which journey Surian collected over a thousand plants and PLUMIER made numerous drawings. In later years he undertook a second and a third journey to the West Indies, but without SURIAN. In 1703 he published an illustrated work (*Nova Plantarum Americanarum Genera*), in which he described 106 new genera and 219 new species. He was the first to restore the custom to name plants after meritorious persons, which had fallen into disuse since the old Greek authors. At his death he left no less than 6,000 drawings (including 1,200 of animals) which were distributed over various leading libraries in Europe. The genus *Plumiera* (Apocynaceae) was named after him by LINNAEUS.

³⁹ The Latin subst. *bonum* in the sense of "luck"; SPARRMAN would think himself lucky, if he could find . . .

⁴⁰ Incorrect spelling by SPARRMAN; it should be *Hippopotamus*.

⁴¹ SPARRMAN's writing was broken off here by the translator. What was he going to confide to his friend THUNBERG? Certainly no botanical matter, judging from the preceding lines!

Montin's⁴² letter to you that my relations are well. This is all I have heard from them this year.

FOURTH LETTER.

Cape Town, April 22, 1776.

... Now at last I am able to tell you that in a way I have gained my object by staying at the Cape: 1) by using Hottentott. Holl. baths⁴³; 2) by not being mixed up in the dispute that has arisen between Captain Koek⁴⁴ and Mr. Forster; 3) by being able to tell that I have also seen a Hottentott's hovel; 4) by procuring a Cape herbarium. But I have also experienced the most droughty year which Our Lord ever sent the Dutch at the Cape. 5) As to insects and birds I can say the same [that he has procured them—transl.]. And finally (6) by dissecting the Rhinoceros and *manates*⁴⁵, etc.—But now at last: basta!⁴⁶—Eight months *de suite*⁴⁷ I have been travelling, and twice I have camped under the open sky, outside Christianity, for more than one month. Young Emmelman [!] shared my vicissitudes. Sometimes I wished it had been his fair sister instead! Now at my return there is a Swedish ship at Bayo Falso, with which I go home, D.V. [Deo volente]. I wished to God you were as far as that! I hope, however, to meet you one year from now. If then we great ones could join hands [literally: lay our heads together—transl.], the small ones would have to give up. But your *Japanensia absque dubio*⁴⁸ will surpass everything else. Take care not to refresh yourself at Batavia to such a degree that you kill yourself. That would be a very bad turn to the public. But if you could, in passing, manage to get at a capital of silver coins, then you would come back to Sweden more triumphantly! At least don't scorn a good opportunity. The greediness of the Dutch has so greatly influenced me that I wish to have 'daily bread, and

⁴² LARS JONASSON MONTIN was born in 1723 near Gothenburg, Sweden. In 1743 he came to Lund as a student, and two years later he enrolled as a student at Upsala University. In 1751 he took his degree as a doctor of medicine at Lund. Later on, after 1756, he was practising as a provincial medicus at Halmstad (province of Halland), where he died in 1785. During his academical life he started to collect plants, first at Lund, later on at Upsala. THUNBERG has provided him with French and Dutch plants. His valuable herbarium, numbering about 5,000 species, now belongs to the Natural History Museum at Stockholm. THUNBERG named after him the South African genus *Montinia* (Saxifragaceae). The only species, *M. caryophyllacea*, Thunb., Pepper Bush, is common all over the Cape.

⁴³ There is little doubt that the Caledon baths at the foot of the Zwartberg Range are meant here.

⁴⁴ As the Dutch would write Cook if they knew no better!

⁴⁵ = *Manati*: a group of herbivorous marine mammals, some being found near the coast of Mozambique.

⁴⁶ Basta, an exclamation meaning: enough! Adopted from the Spanish by the Dutch and included in their vocabulary.

⁴⁷ French, which means successively, in succession.

⁴⁸ Latin=without doubt. Your Japan plants...

“Decatorcer”⁴⁹ to boot. It seems that your plants will not be sent home this time [=by this occasion], because Kepler keeps to your will *verbatim*. God give that you may be able to take them [literally: do it—transl.] yourself, and then come and meet your friends and wellwishers . . .

Anders Sparrman

Addressed:

Till

den widtärfarne och Wittre

Medicinae Doctoren Petrus Thunberg

Läkjare wid den Kiäjsarl: Japans

Ambassaden⁵⁰

⁴⁹ We cannot even guess the meaning of this word. It may be a corruption beyond recognition of the Dutch word for a certain food or dish. The above utterance of SPARRMAN'S sounds a little peculiar.

⁵⁰ This Swedish address reads in English translation: To the most learned and most experienced M. D. Petrus Thunberg, Surgeon to the Imperial Embassy of Japan.



Plate XVII.

ANDERS SPARRMAN.

A portrait drawn from nature by Mollard and engraved by Hubert. From: ANDRÉ SPARRMANN, *Voyage au Cap de Bonne-Espérance*, etc. (transl. from the Swedish original). Paris 1787.